



THE

POWER

OF

2021-2022  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



CONNECTION



# // I AM, BECAUSE WE ARE //

- The African Philosophy of Ubuntu

In late August, UNO celebrated Durango Days, an annual tradition of welcoming students back to campus. Durango Days is a week of food, music, and socializing, and this year, UNO kicked off the events with a special Convocation celebration at the new baseball park, Tal Anderson Field. During that first week of Fall Semester, I grabbed a walking taco outside Roskens Hall, visited food trucks parked around the Campanile, and enjoyed chatting with many students and colleagues. I was excited to be part of the activity! The energy of people returning to campus, enjoying the fun and festivities, reminded me of a core reason we gather together on this campus—to connect with one another. **Like the quote above expresses so simply, we need community. It's the key to success, growth, and well-being. It's The Power of Connection.**

This year, I personally experienced The Power of Connection many times. I visited my alma mater, Benson High Magnet School, to tour the Health Professions Academy, led by two-time CEHHS alumna, educator Robyn Jernigan. The academy introduces students to over 70 different healthcare careers, and the program is supported by several of our faculty members. What I witnessed in Robyn's classroom was incredible—experiential learning, workforce development, engaged high schoolers on a strong pathway to higher education and careers—all core values here at UNO. You will read more about Benson's Health Professions Academy in this Annual Report.

I also became a client of the UNO Pitching Lab, located in the Biomechanics Research Building. The Pitching Lab provides detailed clinical and biomechanical analysis to help athletes improve performance and prevent injury. I visited the Pitching Lab to have my golf swing analyzed, as the team recently expanded services. They now offer evaluations to sports beyond baseball, including new partnerships with UNO student-athletes. You will read about their impact in the following pages.

As I reflect on the last year, I notice The Power of Connection at work throughout our entire college. When you explore this report, you will learn how the Literacy Team from the Teacher Education Department is helping Omaha-area teachers roll out updated English Language Arts standards; how a new research lab housed in our Department of Educational Leadership is examining issues in education and using data to better inform policy; and how the new chair of our Department of Counseling, Tina Chasek, Ph.D., is supporting faculty and students.

You'll also read more about the people and programs in the School of Health & Kinesiology (H&K) as the team gears up for a renovation of approximately 20,000 square feet of underutilized space within the H&K Building. The REACH Lab Project will expand faculty and student research capabilities, workforce development efforts, and community collaborations related to exercise physiology including vascular physiology, physical activity and health promotion, and orthopedics and sports medicine.

I know you will feel inspired by the people and activities featured in this report, and I hope our stories help you recall your own connection to our campus and to CEHHS. **Thank you for supporting our college and for being part of our story. We simply couldn't do this work without you.**



Nancy A. Edick, Ed.D. | Lois G. Roskens Dean



Dean Edick and UNO colleagues at Convocation



The UNO Pitching Lab team



The Benson Health Professions Academy

- 4 TEACHER EDUCATION SUPPORTS LITERACY INITIATIVES
- 5 Q&A WITH COUNSELING'S DR. TINA CHASEK
- 6 PARKINSON VOICE PROJECT SUPPORTS SPEECH-LANGUAGE CLINIC
- 7 NEW POLICY LAB EXPLORES DATA, ISSUES IN EDUCATION
- 8 GET TO KNOW THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH & KINESIOLOGY
- 14 UNO PITCHING LAB EXPANDS SERVICES
- 16 STORIES FROM THE NU FOUNDATION
- 18 CEHHS HIGHLIGHTS



# TEACHER EDUCATION SUPPORTS LITERACY INITIATIVES



Dr. Jennifer Lemke

Across the U.S, states and school districts are implementing Science of Reading (SoR), a science-based, interdisciplinary approach to literacy instruction drawing from two decades of research into how children learn to read. In 2021, Nebraska revised the English Language Arts (ELA) standards to incorporate SoR, and Omaha-area classroom teachers are being supported in the rollout by the Teacher Education Department (TED).

"Literacy is important because it's embedded in everything that we expect kids to do," explains Assistant Professor Jennifer Lemke, Ed.D.

"Providing instruction and opportunities for students to learn how to read and how to make sense of what they are reading will not only benefit students across the content areas, but in their everyday life. Authentic reading, writing, listening and speaking opportunities need to be embedded in everything we do."

Dr. Lemke leads the UNO Literacy Program with a team of Teacher Education and Library Science faculty who

**// Literacy is important because it's embedded in everything that we expect kids to do."**

- Dr. Jennifer Lemke



Colby Sharp was the keynote speaker at this spring's Metlink



Local literacy leaders present breakout sessions

work to incorporate SoR into UNO's Educator Prep Program curriculum and graduate coursework. The team also provides customized support for school districts.

"Dr. Julie Bell and I have been collaborating with Westside Community Schools over the past year as they look to adopt a new ELA curriculum. We provided professional learning that examined evidence-based practices through the lens of Scarborough's Rope, an SoR framework represented in our new standards."

Dr. Lemke continues, "In 2023, UNO will collaborate with Bennington Public Schools to offer in-district graduate courses. These courses, taught by district leaders, will enhance teachers' knowledge of evidence-based literacy practices and serve as a pathway for teachers to complete an advanced degree or endorsement."

Another literacy support for teachers is the annual Metlink Literacy Conference, a TED-hosted event connecting PK-12 teachers through evidence-based practices. Teachers from MOEC districts can now attend Metlink for no cost, thanks to funding from MOEC director, Martha Bruckner, Ed.D.

"We've been intentional in making sure the breakout sessions and keynote speaker for the Metlink conferences reflect literacy happenings on the state level and provide teachers with knowledge and applicable strategies to implement in the classroom," said Dr. Lemke.

At the spring conference, the keynote speaker was Colby Sharp, a 5th grade teacher, author, and national speaker with a platform of helping kids find motivation to read and fall in love with reading.

"Knowing how important both the skill and will to developing lifelong readers is, we focus on both in our literacy program at UNO," said Dr. Lemke.

The audience agreed. "This conference helped me get excited about teaching reading again," said one Metlink participant. "I left feeling motivated to try to get my students to LOVE reading in the next five weeks."

# Q&A MEET COUNSELING'S DR. TINA CHASEK

Department of Counseling Chair Tina Chasek, Ph.D., LIMHP, LADC, joined UNO in Aug. '21 after a 17-year career at UNK. She also holds an appointment with UNMC's BHECN, the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska. Dr. Chasek was recently named the Julie Hefflinger Professor in Counseling, and her full bio can be found on page 16.

**Q: How did you get interested in the field of counseling?**

I always tell people, this profession picked me. Growing up in a small community, I wasn't exposed to a lot of things. In high school, I wanted to be a hair stylist, but a teacher encouraged me to learn about psychology, which I excelled at, so that's what I studied at UNK.

In college, my part-time job was cleaning offices at the community counseling center. While cleaning, I was fascinated by what was happening there. I often thought, "It would be so cool to work here." Fast forward to when I graduated, I applied for jobs in human services, and I got a job at that counseling center doing case management for kids in the foster care system. It was a full circle moment.

As part of my internship for my master's, I moved to the addiction services part of the center's programming. I ran groups and worked with clients individually at a men's halfway house in Kearney. I also worked with women at a treatment center. That's when I found my specialty of addiction counseling. I saw families impacted by substances – the whole family system gets disrupted, especially the kids.

During my Ph.D. program, I studied the neurobiology of the brain and how substance use impacts the brain. Basically the brain is hijacked by the substances. While substance use starts as a choice, for many people this choice is quickly taken away as the brain chemistry changes. In my work, I get to know the people underneath the disease, and how hard it is to live that life, even if it looks different from the outside.

**Q: What is your vision for the department?**

I will continue the department's mission to train quality clinicians and mental health providers to serve the community. As a leader, my focus is on two things: students and the faculty. Students go on to become practitioners like we are, and I want to train really good colleagues. Also, our programs are so successful because of the excellent faculty. I want our faculty to feel supported, to feel like they're doing their best work. Whatever their research interests are, whatever their goals are, I want them to be able to grow and develop. For me, it is always, how do I help you be your best self? That, in turn, helps me be my best self. I am so honored to be here at UNO and continue the great work that is being done in the department and the college.

As the Julie Hefflinger Professor in Counseling, I want to honor Julie's work as a teacher and guidance counselor by moving the Community Counseling Clinic into a space where kids and families can be served. We're also working on getting our school counseling alumni to return to UNO and take classes to become licensed clinicians, so they can use those skills right in the schools, to tackle those tough mental health issues in their school environment.



## ABOUT UNO'S DEPT. OF COUNSELING

EST. 1965



Accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)



Concentrations include Clinical Mental Health, School Counseling, and Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education



Houses the Community Counseling Clinic, a training clinic for students completing clinical hours, supervised by faculty



[ SPECIAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION DISORDERS ]

# PARKINSON VOICE PROJECT SUPPORTS EDUCATION AND THERAPY IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE CLINIC

The Parkinson Voice Project, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the voices of individuals with Parkinson's, has named UNO as a SPEAK OUT!® & LOUD Crowd® Grant Program recipient.

Up to 90% of people with Parkinson's disease are at risk of losing their ability to speak, according to Parkinson Voice Project's Founder Samantha Elandary. Thanks to SPEAK OUT!® & LOUD Crowd® grant funding, the UNO Speech-Language Clinic in Roskens Hall is offering this highly effective speech therapy program at no cost, helping Parkinson's clients improve their functional communication skills and enhance their quality of life.

SPEAK OUT!® consists of 12 individual speech therapy sessions between client and UNO student clinician, who work together on a series of speech, voice, and cognitive exercises. Clients then move to The LOUD Crowd®, a weekly small group program to help maintain the strength of their voices. The LOUD Crowd® provides vocal practice, accountability, support, and encouragement to help clients maintain communication skills throughout the progression of Parkinson's.

Assistant Professor Lucia Scheffel, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, supervises the clinic's student clinicians—graduate students in UNO's Speech-Language Pathology program. "Students learn about motor speech disorders and Parkinson's disease in class, but when they have an experiential learning such as the SPEAK OUT!® program, it enormously enhances their knowledge and soft skills," explains Scheffel.

"We know that we have the chance to preserve communication skills in persons with Parkinson's disease. We see an improvement of their speech intelligibility, and to teach this to our students, while we can help clients with Parkinson's, it's a real opportunity."

Prior to therapy at the clinic, client Steve Moran struggled with communication in his relationships. "I knew that my voice had gotten quieter because my wife was always saying, 'What, what, what?' to me. I knew I better take care of it or she's going to stop asking."

Moran wiped away tears as he described the impact of therapy, "My wife and I went out to eat the other day, and this place was packed. It was so loud, but we were able to carry on a conversation. As loud as it was, we could talk."

Scan to learn more about Parkinson's therapy from our clients or visit:

[ [CEHHS.UNOMAHA.EDU/SECD](http://CEHHS.UNOMAHA.EDU/SECD) ]



Dr. Lucia Scheffel



Client Steve Moran works with student clinicians



Group sessions help clients maintain communication skills



[ EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP ]

# NEW POLICY LAB EXPLORES DATA, TRENDS IN EDUCATION

Doctoral students in the Department of Educational Leadership, with help from scholars across campus, are exploring trends and issues in education through the Nebraska Education Policy Research Lab.

Thanks to a partnership between UNO and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), doctoral students in the Department of Educational Leadership (EDL) are helping answer important questions about education through the Nebraska Education Policy Research Lab (NEPRL).

NEPRL is a collaborative team of researchers, educational leaders, policy leaders, and educators conducting rigorous research for the purpose of developing a body of evidence-based policy solutions that can be shared and applied widely within the Nebraska education system. Research findings will be distributed as white papers, scholarly journal manuscripts, dissertations, presentations, and workshops to inform policy decision-makers and the broader public.

Educational Leadership Chair, Tami Williams, Ed.D., helped launch NEPRL in 2020 with NU Collaboration Initiative grant funding.

"Through a formal trusted relationship with NDE, UNO has secure access to longitudinal data sets. The data sets have been stripped of personally identifiable info, but retain key demographics about various populations. Student researchers from our department, alongside student statisticians from UNO's Department of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences, are working as partner practitioners, taking deep statistical dives into the data," explains Williams.

"An example of a current research project explores teacher retention. Student researchers are analyzing several years of teacher attrition and mobility data. We'll be able to see where Nebraska teachers are moving between districts or buildings, and where the patterns have landed over the years, both during and before the pandemic."

Brian Stevens, principal at Westbrook Elementary School and UNO student researcher for the teacher retention project, explains the benefits of the partnership, "As a principal, I regularly reference my building and district data on teacher attrition so that we can better retain staff. Being part of NEPRL as a doctoral student allows me to look through a broader lens and explore statewide trends for my dissertation study. It has been fascinating and valuable to learn about data exploration with such a large data set."

"We have always been proud of our UNO student researchers," said Dr. Williams. "Through NEPRL, it is our intention to assist student research in scope and reach. It is a very exciting time for UNO EDL."

## NEBRASKA EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH LAB



### RESEARCH

Answer important questions about education



### POLICY

Disseminate research and evaluation results to inform Nebraska education policies



### PRACTICE

Integrate research into graduate coursework, develop cohorts of practitioners engaging with the research





## H&K: LIVING THE MISSION

According to the university's mission statement, UNO is transforming and improving the quality of life locally, nationally, and globally. The School of Health and Kinesiology (H&K) lives that mission in everything we do – preparing students for meaningful careers, leading research in critical areas, supporting public and clinical health systems, and engaging communities throughout the state, nation, and world.



Research from H&K supports both urban and rural schools and childcare providers across Nebraska, helping to train teaching professionals in child development, particularly in the areas of nutrition and physical activity. We work closely with children with intellectual and physical disabilities, addressing educational disparities through a dedicated focus on academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. We support our military through conducting applied and transnational research with the US Department of Defense.

H&K also offers the only undergraduate Public Health program in Nebraska, which is nationally accredited. Throughout the pandemic, our Public Health alumni and current students demonstrated their knowledge and skills by participating in the COVID-19 mitigation response. Our accredited graduate program in Athletic Training educates licensed medical professionals who support athletes, and provides front-line services in pediatrics, orthopedics, and emergency medicine.

In 2023, we begin renovation for the Research, Engagement, and Community Hub, or REACH Lab. This space will provide a collaborative, hands-on learning environment, accelerate research, expand community engagement, and advance external partnerships in public health, human performance, sports medicine, disability research, and biomedical research.

I hope you enjoy learning more about our dedicated students, alumni, and faculty, and you feel excited, as I do, about what's on the horizon for our school.

**Jason D. Coleman, Ph.D, MSPH | Director, School of Health and Kinesiology**



In 2023, H&K will begin renovation for

### THE REACH LAB RESEARCH, ENGAGEMENT, AND COMMUNITY HUB



## CAMPUS-WIDE AWARDS



**ISABELLE "IZZY" GINAVAN,  
PUBLIC HEALTH**  
*Chancellor's Award for  
Excellence in Research/Creative  
Activity & Dean's Award*

**SADIE LIMBACK,  
KINESIOLOGY**  
*Outstanding  
Student Athlete*

## SUCCESSFUL RE-ACCREDITATION



**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
*CEPH - Council on Education  
for Public Health, Bachelor  
of Science Degree Program*

**ATHLETIC TRAINING**  
*CAATE - Commission on  
Accreditation of Athletic  
Training Education, Masters  
Degree Program*

## THE PROGRAMS



**B.S. IN KINESIOLOGY**

**B.S. IN PUBLIC HEALTH**

**B.S. IN EDUCATION - PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHING**

**M.A. IN ATHLETIC TRAINING**

**M.S. IN HEALTH AND KINESIOLOGY**

*Concentrations in Exercise Science, Health Behavior,  
Physical Activity in Health Promotion, Physical  
Education Coaching, Physical Education Pedagogy*

**PH.D. IN BIOMECHANICS AND KINESIOLOGY\***

*Concentrations in Biomechanics, Physiology of Exercise,  
Motor Development and Control, or Physical Activity*

\*This is a shared program with the Dept. of Biomechanics

## NEW MINORS!



**HUMAN PERFORMANCE  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

**SPORTS MEDICINE  
WORKPLACE WELLNESS**

## H&K FACULTY

**Dr. Jason D. Coleman**  
Director & Professor, Public Health

**Dr. Michael Messerole**  
Assistant Director & Associate Professor,  
Physical Education Teaching

**Dr. Marcia Adler**  
Instructor, Public Health

**Jessica Baldwin**  
Instructor, Kinesiology

**Dr. Ronald Bulbulian**  
Professor, Kinesiology

**Dr. Christopher Burcal**  
Assistant Professor, Athletic Training

**Chris Collins**  
Instructor, Kinesiology

**Dr. Danae Dinkel**  
Associate Professor, Physical Activity  
in Health Promotion

**Dr. Sofia Jawed-Wessel**  
Associate Professor, Public Health

**Shannon Gehr**  
Instructor, Athletic Training

**Dr. John M. Noble**  
Associate Professor, Kinesiology

**Dr. Ayo Olagoke**  
Assistant Professor, Public Health

**Edward Panton**  
Instructor, Kinesiology

**Dr. Song-Young Park**  
Associate Professor, Kinesiology

**Dr. Adam Rosen**  
Associate Professor, Athletic Training

**Dr. Michaela Schenkelberg**  
Assistant Professor, Physical Activity  
in Health Promotion

**Dr. Richard Stacy**  
Professor, Public Health

**Dr. Samuel Wilkins**  
Assistant Professor, Athletic Training

**Glen Wragge**  
Instructor, Physical Education Teaching



**Awesome Alumni, Stellar Students**

**ALAKIIR MAPIOR**

**B.S. IN PUBLIC HEALTH**

At Summer Commencement, Alakiir Mapior celebrated her graduation with her tight-knit family by her side. Alakiir, a Thompson Scholar and aspiring Occupational Therapist, is the first woman in her family to achieve a college degree.

"I wanted to go into Public Health because I wanted to give back to the community," said Alakiir.

Alakiir explained that she was born in South Sudan, but moved to Kenya with her family, settling in a refugee camp.

"A lot of girls like me were not allowed to go to school, but my dad was so passionate about schooling, so me and my siblings went to school there," said Alakiir. "I always tell him, it's because of you that I wanted to pursue education because you've always seen school as something important. Back in the refugee camp, I never knew I could make it this far. I'm so excited, especially for my mom. I am the first girl in my family to have a bachelor degree."



**Learn more about Alakiir and her experience at UNO**

**BRIANNE RAMIREZ**

**KINESIOLOGY STUDENT**

Brianne Ramirez has never been one to back down from a challenge. One moment the 35-year-old gym co-owner and mother of two is coaching clients through exercises. The next, trying to work her way out of an arm triangle during jiu jitsu practice or jumping on a stationary bike to get in a round of cardio before the sun comes up.

Even for someone as fearless as Brianne, going to college to earn a degree was intimidating. "It was definitely scary to go back to school at 35. But you come in and it's like, 'Wow, I can totally do this!'" said Brianne.

Because of UNO's flexible in-person and online course options and supportive campus culture, Brianne is well on her way to achieving her dream of becoming a Physical Therapist.

After picking up various health and training certifications during her career, Brianne's desire to deepen her understanding of human movement drew her to H&K's nationally-renowned Kinesiology program. With such a hectic schedule, flexibility was essential. She received that and more at H&K.

"There is a level of belief in each student, and a genuine desire for everyone to succeed and obtain their degree," said Brianne.



**Learn more about Brianne and her experience at UNO**

**Community Outreach: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING THROUGH ADAPTIVE SPORT**

"One of the university's goals is community outreach," explains Mike Messerole, Ph.D., associate professor and H&K assistant director. "Our Adapted Physical Activity Theory and Practice course gives students the opportunity to participate in activities that prepare them for professional careers, to learn outside the classroom, while providing a service to the community. Helping the community is also the right thing to do. There's a need, and H&K can help with that need."

In Adapted Physical Activity Theory and Practice, students gain experience working with diverse populations through an adaptive sport context. Adaptive sport consists of adapting a sporting discipline to the needs of people with a disability, which can include modifications such as accessible equipment and peer support. The course is taught by Dr. Messerole and H&K faculty member Glen Wragge, and it's a requirement for students in three CEHHS majors: Kinesiology, Physical Education Teaching, and Special Education.

The hands-on, experiential structure is based on an adaptive swim program developed by Wragge over three decades ago. Students work one-on-one with individuals with a disability in a swim lesson format at the H&K pool. The course also surveys societal issues surrounding education, adaptive sports and recreation, and movement challenges associated with specific disabilities.

"Students get a different view of the world, gaining the skills of how to work with people who have different abilities, and developing more empathy and better understanding of what



*Supported by co-coordinators Dr. Mike Messerole (left) and Glenn Wragge (right), Outlook Enrichment offers monthly recreation opportunities for individuals of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. H&K students assist as volunteers.*

individuals with disabilities are experiencing in their daily lives," said Dr. Messerole. "What we find is that our students and our participants become friends. Our students see the person, not the disability."

The course creates pathways for students as well as participants. Wragge and Dr. Messerole recruit UNO students for service opportunities with Special Olympics Nebraska and Outlook Enrichment, an organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of individuals who are blind or have low vision. Additionally, Dr. Messerole has been coaching a Special Olympics swim team, the Barracudas, for 21 years. Many of the athletes learned to swim in the Wragge adaptive swim lesson program. Today, the Barracudas swim team consists of 42 swimmers and six coaches — four of which are UNO current or former students.

"I'm proud to be part of a program at UNO that is rooted in inclusivity. We model the behaviors we expect in our students and show them what it looks like to see people with different abilities as people first," said Dr. Messerole.

**MSHRC + HUESPRING**  
**Huespring Graduates Second Cohort**

The Midlands Sexual Health Research Collaborative (MSHRC), housed in H&K, is an interdisciplinary research and advocacy organization committed to engaging the community through initiatives to support sexual health and wellbeing led by co-directors Sofia Jawed-Wessel, Ph.D., and Jason Coleman, Ph.D.

In 2019, MSHRC expanded programming by launching Huespring, a leadership development program tailored to LGBTQ+ early career professionals. Huespring recently celebrated their second cohort during a graduation event featuring Keynote Speaker Buffy Jamison, co-founder and co-chair of the Iowa Queer Communities of Color Coalition. The third Huespring cohort will launch Oct. 28.

The goal of Huespring is to cultivate thriving LGBTQIA+ communities in Nebraska and beyond through mentorship support, professional development, and community training.



*Huespring celebrated their second cohort with special guest and keynote Buffy Jamison (center)*

Scholars are matched with senior-level, field-specific Mentors for a 7-month program led by national trainers and local experts.

"The funding we've received really shows that the community wants this and sees this as a gap that we are filling – and shows faith in the MSHRC as well, as folk/folks that are established and working in the community already," Dr. Jawed-Wessel said.

**[ VISIT HUESPRING.ORG FOR INFO ]**





## Workforce Development: H&K PARTNERS WITH BENSON HIGH



Thanks to a partnership with Benson High Magnet School's Health Professions Academy, H&K is promoting pathways to healthcare careers for high schoolers

Through an innovative academy model, Benson students explore and work towards a future healthcare profession by learning necessary skills, earning certifications and college credit, and interacting with professionals in the healthcare field.

Lead teacher Robyn Jernigan is a Teacher Education alumna and a recent graduate of H&K's M.A. in Health and Kinesiology program. She developed a Foundations of Healthcare course during her first year of teaching, giving students a glimpse at 70+ healthcare careers. That course laid the groundwork for the academy, which launched in 2016.

Anna Burks is a new Benson High grad, UNO freshman Kinesiology student, and aspiring pediatric occupational therapist. "The partnership between UNO and Benson is essential because we can envision ourselves as working professionals. The UNO field trips and experiences will make us more successful in the future because we are prepared," she explains.

Anna was a student representative on the Health Professions Academy Board alongside Board Member and Co-Chair Adam Rosen, Ph.D., ATC, associate professor and director of UNO's Athletic Training Program.

"From a UNO standpoint, it is part of the university's mission to support the community. Benson students are the future Nebraska workforce and some of those students are coming to UNO. It's a great opportunity to interact with them," said Dr. Rosen.

Marcia Adler, Ph.D., an instructor of Public Health, and Amelia Lanier, Ph.D., an instructor of Biomechanics, also serve as Academy Board Members with colleagues from organizations such as UNMC and Nebraska Methodist College. Board Members assist faculty and staff at Benson with curriculum development, networking, and experiential learning activities.



## TOMOHIRO IDE M.A. IN ATHLETIC TRAINING + CURRENT DOCTORAL STUDENT

Tomohiro "Tomo" Ide is a recent H&K graduate, but he isn't stopping at a master's degree. This fall, Tomo entered the Ph.D. in Biomechanics and Kinesiology program and is working as a Doctoral Graduate Assistant (GA) Athletic Trainer, supporting UNO student-athletes from the Omaha Mavericks Volleyball and Track & Field teams, as the first shared GA between H&K and the UNO Athletic Department.

Tomo gained unique experience at the UNO Pitching Lab, working with athletes on clinical evaluations. "I learned the fundamentals of Athletic Training in the program, but I gained experience of working directly with players to learn more about their in-depth needs in the Pitching Lab," explained Tomo.

That experiential learning opportunity helped Tomo land a summer internship as a certified AT with the Iowa Cubs, a Minor League Baseball Team and Triple-A affiliate of the Chicago Cubs. Tomo's career goal is to work as a certified AT for the major leagues.



Tomohiro Ide at his summer internship with Minor League team, the Iowa Cubs

## Research Lab Highlights: VASCULAR RESEARCH LAB

**How do different levels of activity impact vascular function? Can office workers keep their blood vessels healthy while sitting?** These are just some of the questions being answered in the Vascular Research Lab. The team investigates the mechanisms of underlying diseases including atherosclerosis and peripheral vascular diseases, and the manifestation of vascular dysfunction in aging adults.

The Vascular Research Lab is led by Associate Professor Song-young Park, Ph.D. Dr. Park and his team were recently published in the American Physiological Society's *Journal of Applied Physiology*. When people exhale carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in densely populated enclosed areas, the level of CO<sub>2</sub> can soar up to five times the normal atmospheric level, impacting heart rate, blood flow, and other cardiovascular functions, particularly in the legs. The effects are compounded by sitting in place for long periods of time, reducing function of small blood vessels such as capillaries, and larger blood vessels such as veins and arteries.

Doctoral Research Assistant Liz Pekas explains how this research could impact everyday life. "For anyone working a desk job or taking a lengthy flight, it isn't always possible or ideal to stand up and walk around. This research found that adding in some movement when seated for an extended period of time can help protect vascular function. Moving around can be as simple as tapping your foot, fidgeting, or even pedaling on an elliptical device."

Recent awards of Dr. Parks' include an NIH R01-funded project investigating vascular physiology and mechanical deficits in individuals with leg amputation (grant CO-PI) with Dr. Kota Takahashi of the University of Utah, and Nebraska Collaboration Initiative funding to investigate a novel biomarker in patients with peripheral artery disease (grant PI) and the role of a specific metalloproteinase in diabetes (grant CO-PI) with PI Dr. Paras Mishra from UNMC.



The team at the American College of Sports Medicine Annual Meeting

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN HEALTH PROMOTION LAB

**Associate Professor Danae Dinkel, Ph.D., is passionate about physical activity, especially in early childhood, because of the lifelong benefits.** "Providing opportunities for infants to move can help with early motor skill development which allows for richer language development and better cognitive outcomes. As kids age, physical activity and fitness is linked to higher academic achievement," explains Dr. Dinkel.

Dr. Dinkel leads the Physical Activity in Health Promotion (PAHP) Lab, which includes faculty members John Noble, Ph.D., and Michaela Schenkelberg, Ph.D. PAHP faculty and students explore innovative ways to encourage movement and work with the community to help individuals of all ages to become more physically active.

Early in the pandemic, Dr. Dinkel and her students partnered with The Wellbeing Partners to create COVID-safe classroom and virtual physical activity ideas for students, teachers, and families using infographics and videos. The PAHP team also supports the health of childcare providers, including helping to sponsor the annual Childcare Professionals Renewal Summit, a retreat for Nebraska childcare professionals focused on their own wellbeing.

Joining the PAHP team in 2019, a research focus of Dr. Schenkelberg's is health promotion among children and adolescents with disabilities. Her recent research on physical activity among kids with disabilities, published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, found that children in the study were almost five times more likely to engage in physical activity when outdoors compared to indoors.

Research from doctoral student John P. Rech, Comparison of Physical Activity Between Children With and Without Autism Spectrum Disorder, was recently published in *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*. This fall, John was selected as a Buffett Early Childhood Institute Graduate Scholar, exploring effects of classroom-based interventions on the physical activity of children based on race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.



The PAHP team enjoying a Trapeze Yoga outing

### MORE H&K RESEARCH LABS



**EXERCISE  
PHYSIOLOGY  
LAB**



**SPORTS  
MEDICINE  
RESEARCH LAB**



**THE MOVING  
COMPANY  
DANCE LAB**



**MIDLANDS  
SEXUAL HEALTH  
RESEARCH  
COLLABORATIVE**





Learn how the lab helped pitcher Kyle Seebach achieve a 96 mph fastball



[ BIOMECHANICS ]

# UNO PITCHING LAB EXPANDS SERVICES

The UNO Pitching Lab, which officially opened to the public in Aug. 2020, offers a cutting-edge process to gaining an edge on the competition to pitchers. The lab recently expanded, supporting sports such as golf, volleyball, and soccer — and the team is now providing evaluations to UNO student-athletes.

Through a combination of clinical and biomechanical evaluations, the Pitching Lab offers athletes the opportunity to receive the same expert analysis found at the professional level, helping athletes in their understanding of sports biomechanics, leading to decreased injury risk and improved performance.

The multi-step approach starts with a clinical analysis conducted by the Athletic Training Program (ATP) team — Adam Rosen, Ph.D., Sam Wilkins, Ph.D., and ATP graduate students. A series of clinical tests detailing shoulder strength and range of motion, scapular dyskinesis, and ulnar-collateral ligament ultrasound imaging allow athletes to understand their movement capabilities.

Athletes then receive a detailed assessment of their biomechanics from Biomechanics faculty members Brian Knarr, Ph.D., Tyler Hamer, Ph.D. — a former pitcher — and Biomechanics students. While the athlete performs, data is recorded by a force plate-instrument and 14 state-of-the-art motion capture cameras, recording each athlete's movement at very high frequencies.

Key variables relating to performance and injury risk are analyzed and compiled into a customized report alongside clinical assessment findings. Each report is designed to gain a complete understanding of each athlete's biomechanics in order to keep them healthy and performing at their peak potential.

While a student at Northern Illinois University, pitcher Kyle Seebach traveled to UNO to work with the Pitching Lab team to fulfill a dream of playing for the Major Leagues. Kyle is well on his way—he achieved a 96 mph fastball through the individualized training program and was drafted to the Minor Leagues by the Lake Erie Crushers.

"I think this is one of the most beneficial things you can do besides practicing every day. This will help you understand how your body is supposed to work, help you overcome your deficiencies, and help you get better," said Kyle.



THE PITCHING LAB HELPED BREAK DOWN MY MOTION TO SEE WHAT THINGS I CAN WORK ON IN PRACTICE TO OVERALL HELP ME IN THE LONG RUN."

**KAMRYN MEYER**  
EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSIVE STUDENT  
OMAHA MAVERICKS SOFTBALL  
SUMMIT LEAGUE ATHLETE OF THE MONTH  
& 5-TIME PITCHER OF THE WEEK

# BIOMECHANICS COMMUNITY COLLABS

## UPPER EXTREMITY CLINIC NOW OPEN

Through \$1.5M UNO Big Ideas funding, the Biomechanics Rehabilitation and Manufacturing Initiative, led by Jorge Zuniga, Ph.D., and Brian Knarr, Ph.D., is now offering services to community members with upper extremity injury or amputation. All services are pro bono and include comprehensive upper extremity rehabilitation and creation of low-cost assistive devices. Care is provided twice a month at UNO's Biomechanics Research Building by two licensed Occupational Therapists with hand and upper extremity therapy expertise and specialty certification.



Occupational Therapist Jean Peck, OTL, CHT, works with a client at the Upper Extremity Clinic

## MOVAN + CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER ORTHOPEDICS

The Movement Analysis Core (MOVAN), led by David Kingston, Ph.D., has a new partnership with Children's Hospital & Medical Center Orthopedics to provide clinical gait analyses for children with cerebral palsy and related disorders. The team analyzes walking patterns, muscle activity, forces at the joints, and metabolic efficiency before and after surgical correction of knee deformities. Data are used by clinicians to make treatment recommendations.

Declan Harvey is one of the youngest people to participate in the study. "Declan does not walk now independently, so the hope is that we can figure out ways to help him walk better in the future," said mom Kelsey.



Pediatric client Declan Harvey and mom Kelsey prepare for Declan's surgery with help from MOVAN



Learn more about Declan's experience

## RESEARCHERS LAND COVERS OF TOP HIGH-IMPACT SCIENCE JOURNALS

Two Biomechanics faculty members recently published research in top high-impact journals from the prestigious *Science* family of publications.

### SQUIRREL PARKOUR

With colleagues at UC Berkeley, Nate Hunt, Ph.D., led a series of experiments to study what's behind the acrobatics of "squirrel parkour." The team investigated the cognitive biomechanics of squirrels leaping and landing in trees, helping design better ways for robots to move. The paper appeared in the Aug. '21 issue of *Science*.

### MAKING WALKING EASIER

Research led by Philippe Malcolm, Ph.D., describes a novel way to reduce the energy people spend to walk, as much as by half, which could have applications for therapy received by patients with impaired walking abilities. The findings appeared in the March '22 issue of *Science Robotics*.



Credit: Photo by Judy Jinn, UC Berkeley



## ALUMNUS JOINS CEHHS DEVELOPMENT TEAM



The merit of an educational institution is best measured by the quality of its faculty who equip students with the skills they need to become exemplary professionals and critical thinkers in an ever-changing world.

Shane Bumsted, a two-time UNO graduate, knows from his own experiences the importance of world-class faculty. He understands that endowed faculty professorships are critical to CEHHS and its ongoing efforts to recruit and retain distinguished faculty.

Shane, who joined the University of Nebraska Foundation last year as a development officer for the college, collaborates with potential donors to establish new endowed professorships similar to the Julie Hefflinger Professorship in Counseling and the Marti Rosen-Atherton and John Atherton Clinical Mental Health Counseling Professorship. New professorships like these bring prestige not only to the faculty recipient, but also to the university as a national leader in teaching, research and public service.

Shane knows that the generosity of others helped him achieve his educational goals. He is grateful for the opportunity to be part of making dreams come true, both for donors who want to have a positive impact on future generations and for students striving to better themselves through education.



**INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING A PROFESSORSHIP OR MAKING A GIFT IN SUPPORT OF CEHHS?**  
Contact Shane Bumsted at 402-502-4105 or [shane.bumsted@nufoundation.org](mailto:shane.bumsted@nufoundation.org).

## JULIE HEFFLINGER PROFESSORSHIP IN COUNSELING

Established in 2011, the Hefflinger Professorship supports outstanding faculty at UNO, enabling the university to attract the best and brightest to the ranks of its educators, as well as inspire the next generation of counselors, mentors and youth advocates. It was created to recognize UNO graduate Julie Hefflinger's distinguished career as an advocate and champion for youth. Hefflinger, who earned her master's degree in counseling in 1974 from UNO, has served youth and the community as a development director for the YWCA, a teacher and guidance counselor at Bellevue East High School, and most recently as president of Partnership for Our Kids for nearly 15 years, where she helped Omaha-area youth to succeed through academic support, life skills training, service opportunities and goal setting.



Christine "Tina" Chasek, Ph.D., LIMHP, LADC, associate professor and chair of the CEHHS Counseling Department at UNO and associate rural development director of the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska was named the Julie Hefflinger Professor in Counseling in 2021. Dr. Chasek has strong roots in mental health and addictions counseling with experience in behavioral health care administration; she is currently focused on developing the behavioral health care workforce in rural Nebraska. Her teaching interests include addiction counseling, research, diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and clinical counseling. Dr. Chasek's research has focused on addiction counseling, attitudes of providers about addiction counseling, counselor preparation, clinical outcomes and the behavioral health care workforce.

We want to recognize the giving of the Weitz Family Foundation, Holland Foundation, Dr. Ward and Susan Chambers and other generous donors who made this professorship possible.

## MARTI ROSEN-ATHERTON & JOHN ATHERTON CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PROFESSORSHIP

Abby Bjornsen-Ramig, Ph.D., associate professor in the CEHHS Department of Counseling, was named the first recipient of the Marti Rosen-Atherton and John Atherton Clinical Mental Health Counseling Professorship in October 2021. The professorship was established to pay tribute to Marti Rosen-Atherton and her husband, John R. Atherton, M.S., L.M.H.P., M.A.C., for their contributions to UNO and the community.

A UNO-educated and licensed mental health practitioner, Marti has a 36-year history as a Maverick. Her affiliation with UNO began as a graduate student, then as a professional counselor, instructor, advisor and director of the UNO Counseling Center. Marti advised two generations of first-year students with undeclared majors. She also provided mental health counseling to students, staff and faculty at UNO, as well as in her part-time private therapy practice. John earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from UNO. After a decade in private psychotherapy practice, he returned to UNO in 1983 as an adjunct instructor in counselor education and gerontology. John demonstrated an unwavering passion for teaching and counseling, as well as his love for UNO for the next 28 years. He retired from the classroom in 2011 but continues to serve the community through his private practice.

Dr. Bjornsen-Ramig is a licensed psychologist in Nebraska who teaches graduate-level coursework and advises students in the clinical mental health concentration. As the CEHHS Counseling Department clinic director, she facilitates field experiences for practicum and internship students and serves as the liaison for campus and community partners who train UNO counseling students. She also mentors students professionally, clinically and in their research endeavors.

We want to recognize the giving of Dr. Stephanie F. and Mr. John Koraleski along with the Atherton family and friends who made this professorship possible.



Marti Rosen-Atherton and John R. Atherton (center) are shown with Chancellor Jo Li (left) and Dr. Abby Bjornsen-Ramig (right)

Sustained success in the ultra-competitive sphere of higher education hinges on CEHHS's ability to offer endowed professorships to exceptional faculty. To attract and retain top talent across a diverse set of disciplines and promote interdisciplinary learning, the college seeks to establish new endowed professorships. UNO's ability to uphold its mission is dramatically strengthened by the generosity of its donors. CEHHS welcomes new donors and thanks all who have contributed financially to the college over the past year.

**DONATE TO CEHHS**

The University of Nebraska Foundation's mission is to grow relationships and resources that enable the University of Nebraska to change lives and save lives.

Scan the QR code or visit  
**[ UNOFUND.ORG/CEHHS ]**





# 2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS



## TEACHER EDUCATION

Mr. Gabriel Gutiérrez, Dr. Ferial Pearson, Dr. Willie Austin, Dr. Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo, and Dr. Derrick Nero developed the inaugural Future Teachers of Color Summit with NU System Inclusive Excellence Development grant funding.

Alumnus Lee Perez recognized as Nebraska Teacher of the Year by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Education Student Gabbi Calderon received the UNO Outstanding Service Learning Award.

Dr. Debora Wisneski, Dr. Kristina Stamatis, and Kate Knudsen launch the Omaha Urban Thinkscapes Project with a team of community partners.



## SPECIAL EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Eighteen students graduated with master's degrees from the second cohort of the Special Education Career Ladder.

Dr. Mitzi Ritzman served as a Service Learning Faculty Fellow for the college.

Dr. Shari DeVeney and Tina Peterkin traveled to the Dominican Republic with students and faculty from the Creighton University OT program to set up a service experience for Speech-Language Pathology students.



## HEALTH & KINESIOLOGY

The UNO Athletic Training Program launched the Denise Fandel Distinguished Lecture Series.

The Kinesiology Program recognized by the National Strength and Conditioning Association.



## BIOMECHANICS

Dr. Jorge Zuniga, Dr. Brian Knarr, and Dr. Nick Stergiou receive a \$1.1M NASA Nebraska EPSCoR grant for 3D printing research on the International Space Station.

Dr. Nick Stergiou, Dr. Aaron Likens, and Dr. Spyros Mastorakis receive \$446,000 NSF grant.

Cardiovascular Biomechanics Labs expanded with technology such as new and advanced materials, soft tissue, and computational modeling.

Biomechanics funded 48 graduate assistants.

The Biomechanics Team celebrated the first in-person Biomechanics Conferences and National Biomechanics Day since 2019.



## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Department of Educational Leadership is one of the founding member organizations for the Nebraska Association of Professors of School Leadership (NAPSL).

Dr. Tami Williams, Dr. Nancy Edick, and Dr. Kevin Riley helped provide leadership for Collaborative Resilience, a community event for education leaders.



## COUNSELING

Counseling students provided clinical services to a total of 1,140 clients in the Community Counseling Clinic.

School Counseling Program partners with UNO's Service Learning Academy to provides group counseling services in the area schools.





# 2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS

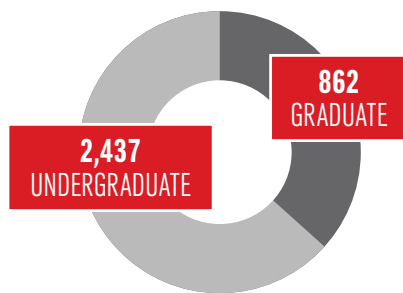


## ENROLLMENT

### NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED PER UNIT | FALL '22

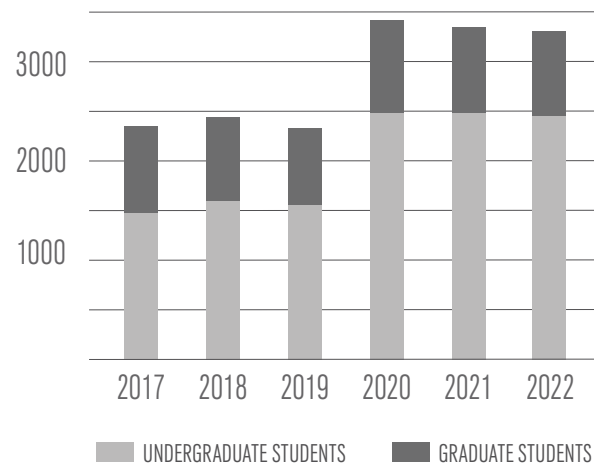
- Biomechanics: **269**
- Counseling: **248**
- Educational Leadership: **192**
- Health and Kinesiology: **1,359**
- Special Education & Comm. Disorders: **633**
- Teacher Education: **1,175**

### OUR STUDENTS | FALL '22\*

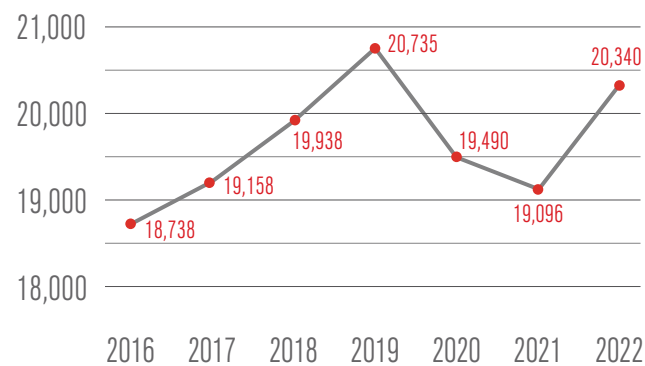


\*Note: Removes duplicate counts across units

### TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENTS



### STUDENT CREDIT HOURS PRODUCED



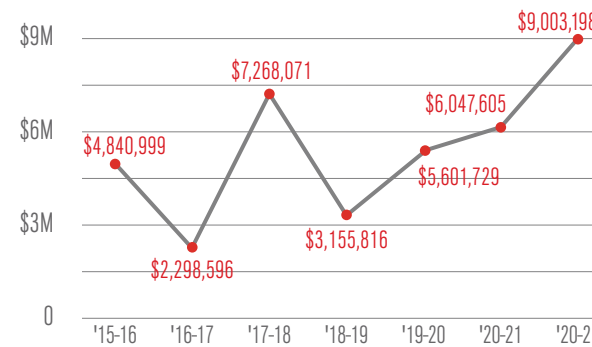
## EXTERNAL FUNDING

# \$68.7 MILLION

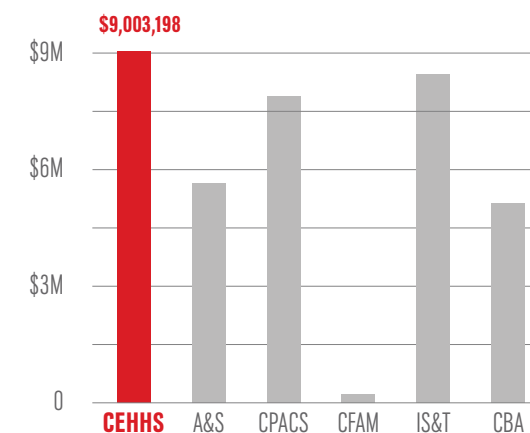
in faculty grant proposals submitted in 21-22

### GRANTS AWARDED (2015 - AUG. 2022)

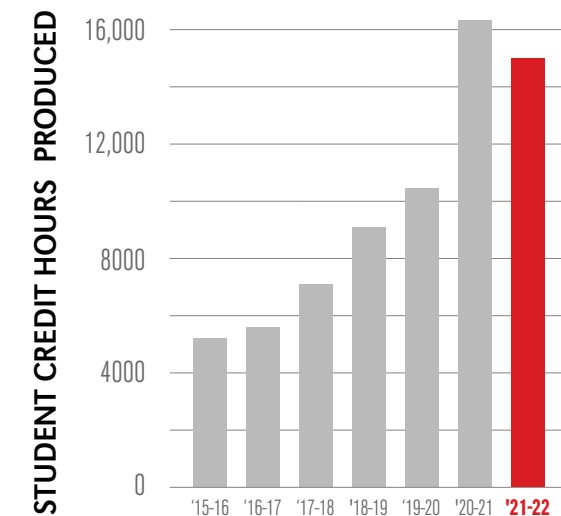
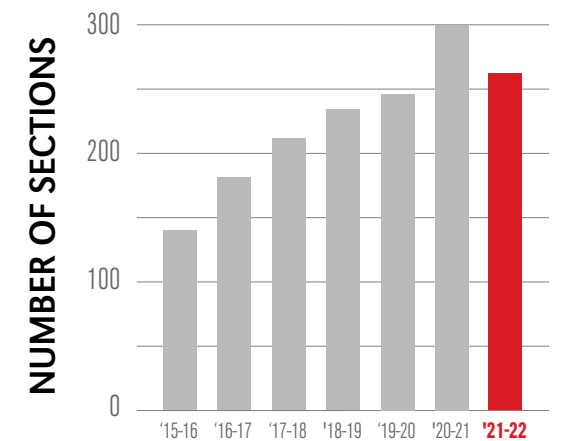
Data now reported by academic year



### GRANTS AWARDED BY COLLEGE | 21-22



## DISTANCE EDUCATION



## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

**Dr. Deb Wisneski** received the Joe L. Frost Award for Distinguished Research from the US Play Coalition.

**Dr. Kelly Gomez Johnson** received UNO's Excellence in Teaching Award.

**Dr. Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo** selected by the Office of Academic Affairs as a Leadership Faculty Fellow.

**Dr. Abby Bjornsen-Ramig** received a 2021 Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award.

**Dr. Tina Chasek** awarded the 2021 Distinguished Partner Award through the Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Career and Technical Education.

**Dr. Nick Stergiou** was ranked among the top 2% of researchers in the world in a Stanford University report published in the Public Library of Science Biology journal.

**Mr. Jonathan Scherling** appointed Executive Director of the Nebraska Deaf Heritage Museum and Cultural Center.

**Dr. Adam Rosen** graduated from Leadership Omaha Class 44.

**Lorraine Street** and **Hanna Solberg** presented with KUDOS Awards by the NU Board of Regents.



# CEHHS ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

*Lois G. Roskens Dean*

Dr. Nancy A. Edick

*Associate Dean*

Dr. Neal Grandgenett

*Associate Dean*

Dr. Kris Swain

*Publications Editor/Design*

Mimi Boswell

*Photography*

Mimi Boswell

A.J. Olnes

Ryan Soderlin

Elsie Stormberg

Stephanie Veloso

and other collaborators

The **CEHHS Annual Report** is published by the Office of the Dean, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences, at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Issues of past CEHHS publications can be found at [cehhs.unomaha.edu](http://cehhs.unomaha.edu). As our publications continue to evolve in design and content, we welcome commentary to promote the best communication for our supporters. Please direct all requests to [unocehhs@unomaha.edu](mailto:unocehhs@unomaha.edu).

Our mailing list is compiled from multiple sources, some readers may receive duplicate copies. Please share extra copies, or send us the address panels from all the copies you receive and we will correct the duplication. Send to: the Office of the Dean, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences, 211 Roskens Hall, 6005 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68182-0161, or call 402.554.2719.

*The University of Nebraska at Omaha does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its education programs or activities, including admissions and employment. Retaliation related to reports of discrimination and the University's response to such reports is prohibited and is a violation of University policy.*

*Brushstroke arrow graphics created by Freepik. Photo on page 4 courtesy of Kelley Bell. Photo on page 8 location courtesy of Montessori Educational Centers. Photo of dancers on page 9 courtesy of Debra S. Kaplan. Photos on top of page 11 courtesy of Outlook Enrichment. Photo on page 19 of Lee Perez and students courtesy of Nebraska Department of Education.*





UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,  
HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

NON-PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
OMAHA, NE  
PERMIT NO 301

Roskens Hall  
6005 Dodge Street  
Omaha, NE 68182-0161

9.2022